

Editorial

In April 2010 a third supervision conference was held in Auckland Aotearoa NZ. A wide variety of papers were presented by practitioners who represented a range of professions and the conference was supported by a selection of keynote addresses and workshops from international speakers and experts.

The first Aotearoa NZ supervision conference in 2000 demonstrated, through the high quality of the contributions and the response of the conference participants, that supervision was in good heart and that there was commitment and energy from all to deliver excellence in supervision practice and scholarship (Beddoe & Worrall, 2001). The second conference in 2004 saw many new professions represented (Beddoe, Worrall & Howard, 2005). Ten years further on we review the state of supervision.

The landscape of supervision has changed over the last ten years. Research on and associated publication in supervision has grown exponentially and we see a greater range of professions who have adopted supervision as a form of professional practice. In an increasingly regulated and risk averse practice environment, supervision has had to define and defend its professional focus and, as we were reminded in the final keynote address there is also a risk that supervision becomes too easily promoted as the panacea for hugely stressed health and social care systems. A number of papers presented here in these proceedings discuss these tensions and responses to the current context of supervision.

The quality of research and scholarship which informs and shapes supervision is reflected in the excellent papers presented here. Carole Adamson invites supervisors to look beyond the individual supervisee and to consider the supervisee's responses to complexity as being embedded in wider political contexts of the work place. Vivianne Flintoff and Paul Flanagan suggest important questions supervisors, practitioners and agency managers can ask themselves to ensure the external supervision service is 'a three way relationship; situated within ethics of care, collaboration, and relationship'. Kieran O'Donoghue addresses relevant issues to professional supervision in the NZ context by analysing the discourses of biculturalism, indigenous development and multiculturalism set within an analysis of the organizational, professional and statutory environments. Vicki Paulin notes that prior to the late 1990s, most NZ dietitians had not heard of the concept of professional supervision but reports that today supervision practice is becoming increasingly accepted.

In a selection of short papers, 'Supervision in Action', Vivienne Cree discusses supervision of PhD students; Anna Elders considers supervision and its role in preventing vicarious trauma. Sue Foster addresses the vexed issue of accountability and external supervision. In the same section Lisa King and Vicki Hirst discuss on-line supervision services and Carolyn Simmons Carlsson & Janice Mueller outline the development of a strong culture of supervision.

Supervision has matured and developed in the past ten years and the debate around its territory and obligations has served to strengthen and sharpen its goals and focus. Janet May and Deb Stanfield report being asked their opinion as to the state of supervision. We echo their unhesitating response that, indeed, supervision remains in good heart.

Our thanks to the team of reviewers listed below who assessed the papers and provided useful feedback and suggestions to the authors.

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